

# MESOPOTAMIAN MINUTE

*- Current News on Agriculture & USDA in Iraq -*

**Office of Agricultural Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Baghdad**

Sunday, January 2, 2011



**Beekeeping Project for Diwaniyah Widows** - Diwaniyah PRT Agriculturral Advisor, Omar Shwani coordinated with the Babylon Beekeepers Association to provide training for 10 widowed farmers on honey production and other topics critical to establishing a successful beekeeping business. This project was funded through the Quick Relief Fund.

**Soil Lab Equipment Donated to the Diwaniyah College of Agriculture** – Diwaniyah PRT Agricultural Advisor, Omar Shwani, secured CERP funds to purchase soil laboratory equipment to benefit the students and faculty of the Diwaniyah College of Agriculture. The soil lab equipment will enhance the college's capacity to develop students' skills and give researchers the tools needed to develop new efficient techniques to assist farmers' productivity..

**Farm Management and Agribusiness Training in Erbil** – USDA will coordinate agricultural extension training January 9-13 in Erbil. The training is focused on extension methodology with technical topics being the medium used to teach extension. The training will focus specifically on teaching extension agents how to teach farmers better greenhouse management practices and how to work with farmers to solve problems related to greenhouse management.

**2011 Buyer Mission Recruitment** – The Office of Agricultural Affairs has recruited Iraqis to attend Gulfood in Dubai (200 U.S. exhibitors), the International Poultry Expo in Atlanta, and the 50th Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference in Huntington Beach.

## *DID YOU KNOW*

### **Iraq Geography**

Area: 437,072 sq. km.; about the size of California.

Cities: *Capital*--Baghdad , *Other cities*--Basrah, Mosul, Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah, Erbil.

Terrain: Alluvial plains, mountains, and desert.

Climate: Mostly hot and dry.

**Personnel Update** - There are currently 31 USDA personnel in Iraq including those with Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), at Embassy Baghdad or embedded with U.S. military units.

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